

A GIANT WATER-STRIDER FROM TONKIN (Hemiptera, Gerridae).¹

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Amongst the Hemiptera collected by the Sladen-Godman Trust Expedition, 1924, is a huge water-strider of the genus *Limnometra* Mayr. This colossal species absolutely dwarfs all the other species of Gerridae in the British Museum and is by far the largest so far described.

Limnometra gigas sp. nov.

♂. Head about one-third longer than the anterior lobe of the pronotum (3 mm.), above dark fuscous to black covered with a fine golden scale-like pubescence, the occipital lobes, a large spot in front and adjoining each eye, a median broad longitudinal vitta and the posterior disc of the vertex obscurely fulvous; below including the bucculae pale ochraceous covered with a rather long white pubescence; rostrum extending onto the base of the mesosternum, pale ochraceous the third joint reaching the hind margin of the prosternum its apical half fulvous and glabrous, the apical joint black and shining; antennae moderately slender, fuscous, dark at the extreme base of the first joint, paler apically the basal joint as long as from the anterior margin of the pronotum to midway between the humeral prominences, second joint rather less than two-thirds the length of the first and much more slender, third joint about three-quarters the length of the first (remaining joint accidentally broken off and lost but was about equal in length to the third and very slender), length of joints: 5.8, 3.4 and 4.5 mm.

Pronotum slightly more than twice as long as wide, not medianly carinate, dark fuscous covered with a fine golden scale-like pubescence, with a median longitudinal line which is yellow and distinct on the anterior lobe but fulvous and obscure on the posterior lobe, also a sinuate fulvous fascia on each side of the anterior lobe behind the eyes which is continued along the lateral margin of the posterior lobe to the humeral prominence; the posterior margin of the pronotum rounded to the form of a parabola of base 5 mm. and median length 4 mm., humeral prominences very distinctly elevated and shining, two obscure shining tubercles on a level

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with the humeral prominences and placed further from each other than from the latter.

Prosternum pale ochraceous covered between the acetabula with long white hairs, the outer sides of the acetabula fuscous. Mesosternum pale ochraceous covered with a fine white pubescence, the sides below the posterior lobe of the pronotum including the outer sides of the acetabula, dark fuscous with a median longitudinal band of silvery pubescence, a longitudinal area immediately below the humeral angle of the pronotum, fulvous and a short line at the base of the acetabular suture fuscous. Metanotum with the metaphragma pale ochraceous, the sides fulvous with a dark fuscous lateral fascia including a narrow band of silvery pubescence, the outer sides of acetabula fuscous; anterior margin of metaphragma in the middle with a minute brownish pore (*omphalium*).

Hemelytra dark fuscous reaching to the middle of the sixth abdominal tergite. Abdomen above bright orange red with the sixth tergite and the greater part of the middle of each segment of the connexivum fuscous; below angular but not carinate medianly, pale ochraceous the connexivum flavous and bordered interiorly along the lateral longitudinal impressions with fuscous; spines of the sixth tergite dark fuscous extending well beyond the apex of the abdomen, their apices divergent, the posterior margin of the sixth ventrite more or less semi-circularly emarginate between the lateral spines. Legs fuscous the anterior trochanters, the bases of the anterior femora, and the apices of the middle and hind femora flavous; the hind tibiae pale ochraceous except towards their bases; anterior tarsal claws unequal in length, middle femora unarmed.

Measurements: Length from apex of head to tip of abdomen 34 mm. (the spines of the 6th abdominal segment extend 0.75 mm. beyond the tip of the abdomen), from apex of head to posterior margin of pronotum 14 mm. Breadth across humeral angles of pronotum 5 mm., across middle acetabula 7.2 mm. Anterior femur 10.2 mm., tibia 9.2 mm., tarsus 3 mm. Middle femur 42 mm., tibia 40.2 mm., tarsus 10.2 mm. Hind femur 44 mm., tibia 64 mm., tarsus missing.

1 ♂, Tonkin, Thai-Nien, basin of Fleuve Rouge, 1924 (*H. Stevens*). This huge species resembles in some respects *Gerris mikado* Kirk from Japan² which Kirkaldy placed in the subgenus

² It is possible that *G. mikado* Kirk is synonymous with *Limnotrechus elongatus* Uhler (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 19, p. 273, 1897), from the same locality.

Aquarius. The long and slender antennae with the basal joint shorter than the second and third together and the middle and hind femora longer than the body are, however, characteristics of *Limnometra* Mayr. to which genus I have therefore referred this species. In the type specimens of *G. mikado* the antennae are damaged and only the first and second joints are present. In his description³ Kirkaldy has not given the relative lengths of the antennal joints and he has also omitted to state that the anterior margin of the pronotum is elevated and provided with a conical projection beneath each eye. The middle and hind femora are shorter than the body.

NOTE.—*Gerris mikado* Kirk. cannot be the same as *G. elongatus* Uhler, because: The middle and hind femora are shorter than the body in *mikado*; but the middle are longer than the body and the hind subequal to it in *elongatus*. This character is not mentioned by Uhler in his description, where he merely says: "legs very long."

As to the proper genus to which to attribute these three species, obviously on facies *elongatus* Uhler, although described in *Limnotrechus* is an *Aquarius*; Kirkaldy states his species belongs to this genus also. The latter author has pointed out that the characters separating these two genera fail in *Gerris chilensis*, which forms the passage from *Gerris* subgenus *Gerris* (= *Limnotrechus*) to *Gerris* subgenus *Aquarius* (= *Hygrotrechus*). Hence, while we may as a matter of convenience maintain these subgenera with mental reservations, as a matter of fact, they have no real standing. Further, species intermediate to or partaking of the characters of each genus, may well be anticipated; and such characters may well become of passing importance.—
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³ Revue d'Ent. France, 18, p. 89 (1899).